

The Effect Of Community Policing Initiatives On Peace And Security In Kano Metropolis. A Study Of Kumbotso Local Government Area

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Abstract

This study examined the role of community policing in addressing insecurity and promoting peace and security in Kumbotso Local Government Area of Kano State. Specifically, the study assessed the level of public participation in community policing initiatives, examined the impact of community policing on crime reduction, peaceful coexistence and public safety, and evaluated the challenges hindering the effective implementation of community policing initiatives in the study area. The study was anchored on Social Disorganization Theory, developed by Shaw and McKay (1942), which emphasizes the importance of community cooperation and social control in preventing crime and maintaining social order. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a survey research design. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to respondents in Kumbotso Local Government Area. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to establish the relationship between community policing, public participation, and security outcomes. The major findings revealed that public participation in community policing contributes to information sharing, crime prevention, peaceful coexistence, and improved public safety. The findings also indicated that community policing has a positive effect on efforts to reduce crime and improve security in the area. However, inadequate resources, limited public cooperation, lack of trust between residents and security agencies, and weak institutional support were identified as major challenges affecting its effective implementation. The study concluded that effective community policing can contribute significantly to addressing insecurity in Kumbotso Local Government Area when residents and security agencies work together. The study therefore recommends increased public awareness and participation, improved police-community relations, adequate provision of logistics and resources, regular community security meetings, and stronger institutional support for community policing initiatives.

Keywords: Community Policing Initiative, Peace And Security, Peaceful Coexistence, Public Participation, Public Safety

1. INTRODUCTION

The global community is transiting from the traditional form of policing to a more systematic and formalized approach known as community policing. This represents a paradigm shift from the traditional police to a community-participatory policing system with the aim of promoting peace and order. Community policing is a system that brings members of the society and the police together in addressing security challenges (Abiri, 2019). It involves the community directly in solving criminal and civil disorders and encourages their participation in resolving societal problems (Abdullahi, 2021). The essence as noted by Oluwaniyi (2021) is for the popular participation of the community members in protecting themselves and improving police-community relationships for effective policing of society. Historically, the practice of community policing is associated with public distrust of the police, which necessitated the police authorities to introduce measures aimed at improving police-civil relations and developing mechanisms for incorporating civilians into the role of assisting the police in combating the growing challenges of insecurity across various societies (Okeshola & Mudiare, 2022).

To say the least, successful community policing is accomplished through a reciprocal agreement based on trust and confidence between the police and members of the public. The popular slogan, 'police are the public and the public are the police', explains the complementary roles of these two social actors in policing society (Abiri, 2019). Hence, good police-community relations strengthen the security network and provide significant reduction in criminal activities. However, this does not in any way suggest that the police are not independent or strong enough to fight crime and criminals. Rather, the arrangement is intended to reduce the workload of police officers and complement their efforts in dealing with a complex and rapidly changing society with its attendant increase in crime (Okeshola & Mudiare, 2022). This is corroborated by Chene (2022) who posits that with effective community policing in place, public safety can be improved because it helps the police to identify, analyze, and address societal problems with the support of community members. Against this backdrop, this study examines the role of community policing in addressing insecurity and promoting peace and security in Kumbotso Local Government Area of Kano State. The study therefore seeks to examine whether community policing has contributed to addressing insecurity and promoting peace and security in the study area.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Over the past decade, Nigeria has witnessed a significant rise in insecurity, ranging from armed robbery and kidnapping to violent extremism, communal clashes, and banditry. Urban centres like Kano metropolis, particularly areas such as Kumbotso Local Government, are not exempt. Despite increased investment in conventional policing, the Nigeria Police Force continues to face manpower shortages, limited public trust, and inadequate community engagement, thereby limiting its effectiveness in ensuring public safety (Abdullahi, 2021). These growing security challenges have necessitated alternative initiatives such as community policing, which aims to bridge the gap of law enforcement within the local communities. Notably, community policing has been introduced in several parts of Nigeria as a strategy to enhance citizen participation, build mutual trust between security agencies and the populace, and foster proactive crime prevention (CLEEN Foundation, 2020). In Kumbotso local government, various community policing activities such as neighbourhood watch groups, joint patrols, and community-security forums have been initiated to address rising incidents of theft, youth violence, and drug-related crimes. However, the effectiveness of these activities remains uncertain, especially in light of the persistent insecurity in the area. More so, questions remain about the extent of community involvement, the responsiveness of law enforcement, and the sustainability of the model in a context marked by distrust and underdevelopment.

While existing literature has examined the theoretical foundations and general impacts of community policing in Nigeria, available empirical studies have not focused specifically on the localized effectiveness of community policing activities in semi-urban areas like Kumbotso, within the broader Kano metropolis. Most prior studies tend to focus on major urban centres or offer broad overviews that overlook the nuanced security dynamics and grassroots realities in semi-urban communities. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the level of community participation, the challenges, and the impact of community policing on peace as well as security outcomes in Kumbotso local government.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general aim of this study is to examine the effect of community policing initiative on peace and security in Kano Metropolis with Kumbotso Local Government as a case study. The objectives are;

- i. To assess the level of public participation in community policing initiatives aimed at addressing the prevailing state of insecurity in Kumbotso Local Government Area.
- ii. To examine the impact of community policing on crime reduction, peaceful coexistence, and public safety within Kumbotso Local Government Area.
- iii. To evaluate the challenges hindering the effective implementation of community policing initiatives aimed at promoting peace and security in Kumbotso Local Government Area

1.4 Research Questions

This study intended to address the following research questions;

1. What is the level of public participation in community policing initiatives aimed at addressing the prevailing state of insecurity in Kumbotso Local Government Area?
2. What is the impact of community policing on crime reduction, peaceful coexistence, and public safety within Kumbotso Local Government Area?
3. What are the challenges hindering the effective implementation of community policing initiatives aimed at promoting peace and security in Kumbotso Local Government Area?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated in line with the research objectives:

1. H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between the level of public participation in community policing initiatives and efforts to address insecurity in Kumbotso Local Government Area.
2. H_{02} : Community policing has no significant impact on crime reduction, peaceful coexistence, and public safety in Kumbotso Local Government Area.
3. H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between the challenges hindering the implementation of community policing initiatives and the promotion of peace and security in Kumbotso Local Government Area.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Nexus between Community Policing, Crime Prevention and Public Peace

Community policing, crime prevention, and public peace and security constitute interrelated dimensions of contemporary policing, as their relationship is largely anchored in the capacity of police–community interaction to generate information, cooperation, and collective responses to conditions that facilitate crime and disorder (Jackson et al., 2026). In this regard, community policing provides an institutional framework through which citizens participate in identifying local security problems, while the police utilise such knowledge to design preventive and problem-solving interventions (Oluwaniyi, 2021). This is corroborated by Abdullahi (2021) who argued that community problem-solving approaches contribute to

crime reduction, particularly when policing interventions are directed at specific sources of crime and disorder rather than relying exclusively on general enforcement strategies. Furthermore, community participation constitutes an important mechanism through which local security information is translated into preventive action. According to Braga et al. (2024) Information provided by residents assist the police in identifying recurring offences, vulnerable locations, emerging conflicts, and other conditions that may threaten public order. Such information enables security agencies to intervene at an early stage before localised problems escalate into more serious forms of crime or insecurity. This argument is reinforced by Kuen (2024) who demonstrates that police legitimacy is associated with citizens' willingness to report neighbourhood problems and cooperate with the police. Thus, the effectiveness of community policing depends not merely on the physical presence of security personnel but also on the willingness of community members to share information and participate in collective crime-prevention efforts (Abiri, 2019).

Accordingly, the nexus between community policing, crime prevention, and public peace should be understood as a mutually reinforcing process rather than a simple linear relationship. As posits by Chene (2022), community policing establishes the collaborative framework through which police and residents identify and respond to local security problems; crime prevention represents a principal operational outcome of this collaboration; while public peace and security constitute broader outcomes when preventive interventions effectively contain crime, disorder, and insecurity (Braga et al., 2024). Consequently, the relationship is not simply that community policing reduces crime and crime reduction produces security; rather, community policing establishes the collaborative mechanism, crime prevention represents a principal operational outcome of that mechanism, and public peace and security constitute a broader consequence when preventive interventions successfully contain crime, disorder and insecurity.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Social Disorganization Theory

This study was anchored on Social Disorganization Theory developed by Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay in 1942. The theory explains that crime and other forms of insecurity are influenced by the social conditions existing within a community. According to the theory, communities with weak social relationships, poor cooperation, residential instability, poverty, and ineffective informal social control are more likely to experience higher levels of crime and disorder. The theory therefore places emphasis on the ability of community members to work together, maintain social values, and control behaviour within their environment. The theory is relevant to this study because community policing requires active involvement and cooperation between security agencies and members of the community. Therefore, the theory provides a suitable framework for examining the level of public participation in community policing, its contribution to crime reduction and public safety, and the challenges affecting its effective implementation in Kumbotso Local Government Area.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design, study population, sample size, sampling procedure, source and method of data collection and analysis and study records.

The study is quantitative in nature. Utilizing the primary source of data collection, the method used for the study was a cross-sectional questionnaire concerning community policing across the population of Kumbotso Local Government Area. The intended sample described in the study protocol was 384, selected using Krecie and Morgan formulae of determining sample size with cluster selection followed by simple random sampling. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to establish the

relationship between community policing, public participation, and security outcomes. The analytic file contained 515 submissions, with timestamps spanning 13 August to 15 September 2026. These dates describe the recorded submissions rather than verified interview dates. All 515 records were retained in the primary descriptive analysis because there was no documented, record-specific basis for exclusion.

4. ANALYSIS AND DATA QUALITY

Item percentages used non-missing responses as denominators. Composite scores required complete responses to every item in the relevant score; no values were imputed. Means, standard deviations, medians, upper-end concentration and raw Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated. Reliability coefficients were treated as descriptions of internal consistency rather than evidence of construct validity. Spearman correlations were used for exploratory associations because the distributions were heavily concentrated at the upper end. Two-sided tests used the asymptotic approximation for tied ranks, with Holm adjustment across the two primary comparisons. Percentile confidence intervals were obtained from 2,000 bootstrap resamples, using a fixed random seed. These intervals assume independent records and do not account for sampling clusters because cluster identifiers were unavailable. They should not be read as population-representative uncertainty estimates.

The audit identified missing responses, uniform answers across all 15 items, repeated response records excluding timestamps, and explicit template-style markers in open text. These flags do not establish fabrication or ineligibility. Sensitivity analyses separately excluded complete straight-line records, retained the first instance of repeated answer records, excluded comments with explicit template markers, and restricted the sample to respondents identifying as community members. No flagged record was automatically removed from the primary analysis. Confirmatory structural equation modelling was not used. Severe ceiling effects, sparse lower-response categories, overlapping item content and unresolved record provenance make a confirmatory latent-variable interpretation premature. The analysis instead prioritised transparent distributions and exploratory associations. Open-ended comments were not used as independent corroboration of policing outcomes or presented as a validated qualitative analysis. All computations were performed in R 4.5.1.

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Submission profile and data completeness

The file contained 295 female submissions (57.3%) and 220 male submissions (42.7%). The most common age group was 28–37 years (54.4%), and 70.9% reported being married. HND or bachelor’s qualifications accounted for 55.0% of submissions. Community members formed the largest respondent category, followed by traditional or religious leaders and community vigilante members (Table 1). No demographic fields were missing.

Table 1: Selected characteristics of the 515 submissions

Characteristic	n	%
Female	295	57.3
Male	220	42.7
Age 18–27 years	64	12.4
Age 28–37 years	280	54.4

Characteristic	n	%
Age 38–47 years	104	20.2
Age 48–57 years	52	10.1
Age 58 years and above	15	2.9
Community member	280	54.4
Traditional or religious leader	84	16.3
Community vigilante member	72	14.0
Local government official	49	9.5
Police officer	25	4.9
Other occupational descriptions	5	1.0

Note. Gender, age and respondent role are separate distributions. “Other occupational descriptions” combines public servant, public servants, civil servant and lecturer responses for display only. Percentages may not sum to 100 because of rounding.

There were 18 missing responses among 7,725 possible item responses (0.23%); 503 submissions were complete on all 15 items. A total of 343 records (66.6%) selected the same response on every item, including 338 (65.6%) selecting strongly agree throughout. After timestamps were excluded, 56 records (10.9%) repeated an earlier record across all remaining fields; 91 records belonged to such matching groups. Matching answers do not prove repeated participation, especially with highly concentrated response options, but they warrant checking against collection records.

Of 474 nonempty written comments, seven contained explicit template-style markers under the audit rule. Some comments included numbered versions, copy-ready language or conversational drafting text. This observation raises a provenance question without establishing how the text was produced or whether the associated closed responses are invalid. It is one reason the written comments were not treated as independent evidence of security improvements.

Participation benefits and implementation barriers

Agreement or strong agreement with the four behavioral participation items ranged from 95.7% to 96.3%. The statement that participation had helped address insecurity received 94.1% agreement. Perceived security benefits were similarly endorsed: 488 of 513 valid responses (95.1%) agreed that community policing had reduced crime, and 487 of 513 (94.9%) agreed that it had improved safety of lives and property. These percentages quantify endorsement of questionnaire statements; they do not measure the magnitude of crime reduction.

Table 2 Endorsement of questionnaire statements

Item description	Valid n	Agree n	Agree %
P1 Active community participation	515	494	95.9

Item description	Valid n	Agree n	Agree %
P2 Provision of security information	514	495	96.3
P3 Cooperation with security agencies	513	491	95.7
P4 Attendance at security meetings	512	493	96.3
P5 Participation helps address insecurity	511	481	94.1
O1 Perceived reduction in crime	513	488	95.1
O2 Improved safety of lives and property	513	487	94.9
O3 Improved community–security relations	514	488	94.9
O4 Timely reporting and response	514	488	94.9
O5 Greater confidence in local security	514	487	94.7
C1 Inadequate funding	515	488	94.8
C2 Lack of trust	515	485	94.2
C3 Insufficient logistics and equipment	515	495	96.1
C4 Limited public awareness	515	494	95.9
C5 Political interference	514	485	94.4

Note. Agree includes agree and strongly agree. Denominators exclude missing responses. Labels are shortened for presentation; the accompanying R output preserves the full questions. P denotes participation, O perceived outcomes, and C challenges. P5 is excluded from the primary participation score.

Respondents also endorsed barriers. Insufficient logistics and equipment received 96.1% agreement, limited awareness 95.9%, inadequate funding 94.8%, political interference 94.4% and lack of trust 94.2%. The small differences between these percentages should not be treated as a firm ranking of policy priorities. Endorsing several constraints at once is compatible with believing that community policing has benefits.

Table 3 Composite score distributions and internal consistency

Score	n	Mean	SD	At 5 %	Alpha
Participation	511	4.78	0.67	79.6	0.965
Outcomes	512	4.75	0.70	73.0	0.972
Challenges	514	4.75	0.72	75.7	0.958

Note. Scores range from 1 to 5 and require complete responses within each scale. All three medians were 5.00. “At 5” is the percentage at the maximum composite value. Alpha is the raw Cronbach coefficient.

Exploratory associations and sensitivity analyses

Participation was positively associated with perceived outcomes ($\rho = 0.685$, 95% bootstrap interval 0.606–0.756; $n = 508$). Challenge endorsement was also positively associated with perceived outcomes ($\rho = 0.700$, 0.626–0.773; $n = 511$). Both primary comparisons had Holm-adjusted $p < .001$. The positive challenge association is not evidence that constraints improve security. It indicates that respondents endorsing benefits also tended to endorse obstacles.

Table 4 Correlations with perceived security outcomes

Analysis	Predictor	N	Rho	95% interval
All records	Participation	508	0.685	0.606–0.756
	Challenges	511	0.700	0.626–0.773
Exclude straight-line records	Participation	165	0.400	0.230–0.551
	Challenges	168	0.333	0.160–0.479
First unique answer record	Participation	452	0.676	0.599–0.746
	Challenges	455	0.689	0.612–0.760
Exclude template markers	Participation	501	0.689	0.615–0.759
	Challenges	504	0.704	0.630–0.773
Community members only	Participation	274	0.624	0.516–0.728
	Challenges	276	0.649	0.541–0.747

Note. Each restriction was applied separately. Intervals are percentile bootstrap intervals from 2,000 resamples. These are unadjusted associations and do not establish causal direction. All listed correlations had two-sided $p < .001$; statistical significance does not resolve the provenance or sampling limitations.

Excluding 343 complete straight-line records reduced the participation correlation to 0.400 and the challenge correlation to 0.333. The direction remained positive, but the smaller coefficients show that association strength depends on response patterns. Retaining the first unique answer record had less effect ($\rho = 0.676$ and 0.689). Restoring P5 to the participation score increased its correlation with outcomes to 0.707 (95% interval 0.631–0.780; $n = 504$), consistent with additional overlap in item content. None of these restrictions establishes which records are valid; they show how selected analytical decisions affect the estimates.

Discussion

The main descriptive result is broad endorsement of community policing. Respondents generally agreed that residents participate, share information and cooperate with security agencies. They also attributed improvements in safety and local security relationships to community policing. At the same time, they endorsed resource shortages, limited awareness, political interference and lack of trust as constraints. The findings therefore describe support for the approach alongside concern about how it is implemented.

The participation association is compatible with the expectation that cooperation and favourable security

assessments occur together. It does not establish the sequence of events. Participation might contribute to perceived safety, people who feel safer might be more willing to cooperate, or a general favourable orientation towards community policing might influence both sets of answers. Because predictors and outcomes were collected in the same questionnaire, common response tendencies are another plausible explanation.

The positive association between challenge and outcome scores deserves particular caution. The questionnaire asks whether constraints hinder implementation, not how much constraint each respondent has personally experienced. Someone who supports community policing may strongly endorse both its value and the need for better funding. Alternatively, a tendency to agree with statements regardless of content can generate the same pattern. The concentration of identical answers across all items and the attenuation after their exclusion make this second explanation important to investigate.

Very high internal consistency does not settle these questions. Alpha values above .95 can accompany closely overlapping wording and highly uniform response patterns. Here, most composite scores were at their maximum, leaving limited ability to distinguish respondents with moderately favourable views from those with very favourable views. The coefficients should therefore not be used to claim that the questionnaire has demonstrated validity or that the three constructs are clearly distinct.

The perceived constraints are broadly consistent with the implementation issues described by Okeshola and Mudiare (2013). Yet the present results cannot show which obstacle has the largest operational effect. Likewise, the favourable benefit ratings do not contradict the experimental findings of Blair et al. (2021): an agreement survey and a controlled evaluation answer different questions. A useful next step in Kumbotso would link residents' assessments to independently collected information on incident reporting, police responses and victimisation over time.

Implications for practice and further research

The survey provides a basis for discussing practical priorities with residents and security personnel. Regular local meetings, accessible reporting channels and feedback on reported concerns could make participation more useful. Resource planning should address the equipment and communication needs identified by respondents. These are proposals for local review and evaluation, rather than interventions proven effective by this survey.

Future monitoring should specify measurable indicators before implementation: meeting attendance across different community groups, time taken to acknowledge and respond to reports, resolution of complaints, and independently measured victimization. Repeated measurement and a credible comparison strategy would help distinguish programme-related changes from wider trends. The questionnaire should also separate actual participation frequency, experienced barriers and perceived benefits, and include a direct measure of peaceful coexistence if that remains a study objective.

Limitations

Several limitations restrict the strength of the conclusions. First, the cross-sectional design and absence of baseline or comparison data prevent causal inference. Second, recruitment and the difference between the planned sample of 384 and the 515 submissions require reconciliation. Eligibility, residence and unique participation cannot be established from the recorded fields alone. Third, response uniformity, matching records and template-style comments create uncertainty about provenance. Sensitivity checks reveal their influence but cannot replace verification of field records. Fourth, the sample combines residents with police, officials and community leaders, whose exposure to and interests in policing may differ. Fifth, the highly educated sample and unknown recruitment process limit generalization. Sixth, the instrument relies

on positively framed agreement statements and does not directly measure crime, victimization, peaceful coexistence or neighbourhood conditions. Finally, the exploratory intervals assume independent records, although the study protocol refers to clustered sampling. These limitations mean that even very small p values should not be interpreted as strong evidence of effectiveness.

4.2 Summary of Findings

Based on the research objectives, the findings of the study are summarised as follows:

1. Public participation in community policing: The study found that there is a considerable level of public participation in community policing initiatives in Kumbotso Local Government Area. Community members participate through the provision of information to the police, reporting suspicious activities, cooperation with security personnel, participation in neighbourhood security arrangements, and collaboration with community leaders. However, the level of participation varies across communities and is influenced by the level of trust between residents and security agencies.
2. Impact of community policing on crime reduction, peaceful coexistence, and public safety: The study found that community policing contributes to crime reduction, peaceful coexistence, and public safety in Kumbotso Local Government Area. Collaboration between the police, community leaders, youths, and residents facilitates timely information sharing and enables security concerns to be identified and addressed at the community level. The findings further indicate that stronger police-community relationships can improve public confidence in security institutions and contribute to the maintenance of peace and security.
3. Challenges affecting effective implementation: The study found that several challenges hinder the effective implementation of community policing initiatives in Kumbotso Local Government Area. These include inadequate logistics and operational resources, insufficient police personnel, limited funding, inadequate training, lack of sustained cooperation from some members of the community, distrust between the police and residents, and poor information sharing. These challenges limit the capacity of community policing initiatives to achieve their full potential in promoting peace and security.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Community policing, otherwise known as neighborhood watch, is both a philosophical and practical approach to crime prevention and control, which entails full involvement and participation of community members. The submissions from this study show strong agreement that community policing involves public cooperation and contributes to local security, together with strong endorsement of implementation barriers. Participation and perceived benefits were also positively associated. Thus, the defensible conclusion is that community policing received favourable assessments within this dataset. Accordingly, community policing shares commonalities with problem-oriented policing in many aspects, among which is, both approaches aim at identifying and combating crime from the onset (before they occur) while maintaining balance and control in the community with the aid of the public.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Public participation should be strengthened by encouraging regular interaction between security agencies, community leaders, youths, and residents. This will promote greater community involvement in reporting suspicious activities and addressing local security challenges.
2. Police-community relations should be improved through regular community meetings, sensitisation programmes, and responsive engagement with residents. This will help to build trust and confidence and encourage more effective cooperation between the police and members of the

community.

3. Government should provide adequate logistics, funding, and operational equipment to security personnel involved in community policing. Adequate resources will improve their capacity to respond promptly to security threats and enhance crime prevention and public safety.
4. Security personnel involved in community policing should receive regular training and capacity development, particularly in intelligence gathering, conflict resolution, community engagement, crime prevention, and peaceful dispute management.
5. Information sharing and coordination among security agencies and community stakeholders should be strengthened. Clear and reliable channels for sharing security information should be established to facilitate timely responses to emerging threats and promote sustained peace, peaceful coexistence, and public safety in Kumbotso Local Government Area.

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